

TI-922

Prepared: June 21, 2001

Short Description:

Step 2 of the 8-step Process for Examining Floodplains.

Inquiry:

The PBS Environmental Hotline caller requested clarification of Step 2 of the FEMA guidelines '8-Step Process.' Specifically, the caller asked: Is a public notice/notification in the newspaper sufficient, or is a public meeting necessary? Is this decision left to the region? What determines what type of action is necessary?

Response:

For the public review process involving the '8-Step Process,' one should refer to documents outlining the policy and procedures that GSA must follow in this scenario as described below.

It has been established that when a potential site for a federally funded project is located in a floodplain, or impacts from the project will effect a local floodplain, under Executive Order 11988 the agency must follow particular guidelines to ensure all possible alternatives and mitigation measures are examined. Executive Orders can be found through the web site, <http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/home.jsp>, by following the 'Support for Communities and the Environment' link, the 'Environmental Programs' link, the 'National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)' link, and finally the 'Executive Orders' link on the left. The FEMA guidelines referred to in EO 11988 outline in detail the 8-Step Process, which is used to evaluate projects in floodplains. A thorough description of the guidelines is available from the Water

Resources Council, and a hardcopy of this document will be sent.

Step 2 of this process, where the request originated, involves the public review and comment period. This step allows individuals in the public with comments or concerns to learn more about the project, and offer their input. With respect to the method/form of notification, it is generally a project specific decision as to the procedure that is most appropriate.

It is essential to remember that the public review process is a continuing effort to inform the public and then accept, address and incorporate their comments and concerns in your report. For more information regarding the Public Involvement process, refer to Chapter 4 of your PBS NEPA Desk Guide. If you do not have a copy, one can be sent to you, or you can go to our web site (<http://gsa.gov/Portal/home.jsp>) and follow the links to 'Support for Communities and the Environment,' 'Environmental Programs,' then 'National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)', and finally the 'NEPA Desk Guide' link in the upper left.

Another resource for information is the FEMA web site, which offers interpretations and sometimes more details with respect to the 8-Step Process by region. These sites can be found at the following address - <http://www.fema.gov/> then following links for 'FEMA by Region.'

The materials in this TI have been prepared for use by GSA employees and contractors and are made available at this site only to permit the general public to learn more about NEPA. The information is not intended to constitute legal advice or substitute for obtaining legal advice from an attorney licensed in your state and may or may not reflect the most current legal developments. Readers should also be aware that this response is based upon laws, regulations, and policies in place at the time it was prepared and that this response will not be updated to reflect changes to those laws, regulations and policies.